

# Council Moves To Protect Public Health With Restaurant Smoking Ban

On July 1, the County Council approved legislation that would protect restaurant workers and patrons from the known health hazards of second-hand smoke by prohibiting smoking in all County eating and drinking establishments. It was signed into law by the County Executive on July 10.

The law is scheduled to go into effect on October 9th. The Council action follows other smoking restrictions in restaurants and bars in effect in cities such as New York, Austin, and Boston, as well as in the states of Delaware, California, Florida, and Connecticut. Not included in the ban are outdoor eating areas of restaurants and private clubs with liquor licenses.



## We've Got Your Number ...Clip & Save

The Montgomery County Council .....	240-777-7900	Fire Code Violations .....	240-777-2457
Abandoned Cars .....	301-840-2454	Housing & Code Enforcement .....	240-777-3600
Animal Complaints .....	240-773-5925	Housing Opportunities Commission .....	301-929-6700
Animal Services .....	240-773-5960	Land Records .....	240-777-9477
Board of Education .....	301-279-3617	Library Telephone Reference .....	240-777-0001
Building Permits & Inspections .....	240-777-6210	Montgomery College – General Information	
Bus Schedules .....	240-777-RIDE	Noise Control .....	240-777-7770
Child Care .....	301-279-1773	Park and Planning Commission .....	301-495-2525
ChildLink (birth to age 5 information) .....	240-777-GROW	Parking Violations .....	240-777-8960
Circuit Court .....	240-777-9466	Parks .....	301-495-2525
Community Use of Public Facilities .....	240-777-2706	Pet Licenses .....	301-279-1095
Consumer Affairs .....	240-777-3636	Police Non-Emergency .....	301-279-8000
County Executive .....	240-777-2500	Property Tax Information .....	240-777-8950
County General Information .....	240-777-1000	Recreation Programs .....	240-777-6804
County Attorney .....	240-777-6700	Recycling & Leaf Collection .....	240-777-6410
Crisis Hotline (24 hours) .....	301-315-4000	Schools Information .....	301-279-3391
Drug Enforcement .....	301-840-2500	Snow Removal & Potholes .....	240-777-7723
Emergency Police, Fire & Rescue .....	Dial 911	Street Lights .....	240-777-2190
Environmental Protection .....	240-777-7770	Zoning Information .....	240-777-6240
Garbage Collection .....	240-777-6400	Zoning Complaints .....	240-777-6259

# Check Out Your County Council on the Web and on TV

Get more details on the County budget, the County Council, and all issues that affect your family. The information available includes agendas and schedules for upcoming Council sessions and committee meetings – and even detailed packets from Council analysts on issues before the Council. Check out the Council on the Web at [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council).

On County Cable Montgomery (channel 6), you'll find full broadcasts of County Council sessions, plus many public hearings, neighborhood Town Hall meetings, and other feature programming. Check out the schedule listed on the Council website.

And you can tune into to County Cable Montgomery through the Internet – even if you don't have cable TV! Just go to the Council website for live coverage of Council sessions, public hearings, and more.



# News From Your Montgomery County Council



SUMMER FALL 2003



## From the President

Dear Neighbor:

There's no better reflection of what's important to us than where we choose to put our resources. That's true in our family life – and it's just as true about our community.

You elect those of us who serve on the County Council to make just those choices about how our tax dollars are spent – and to make sure they get spent responsibly and effectively.

And when we approve a budget, we're not toting up numbers on a page. We are quite literally mapping our future as a county.

On May 22, the County Council approved an operating budget for the fiscal year that began July 1.

Due to the slowdown in the economy, the lingering effects of September 11, the uncertain international situation, and state budget cuts, Montgomery County faced a \$320 million gap. The Montgomery County Council closed that gap.

There is plenty of pain in this budget – and we've done our best to make sure that pain is shared equitably. We've separated out "wants" from "needs" and cut services in many areas. We've raised additional revenue by approving the County Executive's proposed County income tax increase and also increasing the energy and telephone taxes. We've asked our County employees to contribute to the solution by delaying cost-of-living raises. They've stepped up to the plate to help, netting almost \$20 million in budget savings.

We did so while restoring critical funding for fire and emergency protection and vital health and human services needs. The budget preserves progress on Council initiatives to reduce class-size in the schools and establish all-day kindergarten. It funds school construction needs for the coming year, despite state cuts. And the budget makes a significant down

payment on meeting County transportation needs for more and better roads and expanded transit.

The budget does not include a three-cent increase in the property tax proposed by the County Executive. That increase was defeated by the Council, as were proposed fees of up to \$650 for ambulance services. Proposals to increase development impact taxes were deferred for review, to be considered as part of our review of the County's Annual Growth Policy.

Our fiscal prudence caused us to increase the County's reserve fund, raising it to 5.5 percent of the budget from the five percent recommended by the County Executive. This way, we'll be better prepared to deal with emergencies.

But let's be honest, folks – there are losers in this budget. There are no new initiatives in the school system. There's work with at-risk youth that won't get done, recreational programs cancelled, and fewer new library books on the shelves. And we don't nearly have the money we need to build the schools and the roads that ought to be built.

This year may well be only the beginning of lean fiscal years. We have to get used to doing more with less. This Council will continue the work to match our resources with our needs in a responsible manner.

*Michael Subin*

Michael Subin  
County Council President  
Council At-Large



## Coming Soon To Your Community . . .

The Council's Tuesday sessions – and Council committee meetings – are open to the public. In addition, the Council regularly holds "Town Hall" meetings in communities around the County where Councilmembers field questions and concerns on a broad range of issues.

Upcoming "Town Hall" meetings will be held:

- **SEPTEMBER 24** for **BETHESDA/CHEVY CHASE/FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS** at Westland Middle School, 5511 Massachusetts Avenue
- **NOVEMBER 12** for **KENSINGTON**

Reception at 7:30 PM with meeting beginning at 8 PM  
Call 240-777-7931 for locations. Come one, come all !



Montgomery County Council • 100 Maryland Avenue • Rockville, Maryland 20850  
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PUBLIC SAFETY

- Restored \$343,000 in Fire & Rescue cuts that would have reduced staffing in Kensington and Burtonsville stations.
- Restored administrative personnel to individual Fire/Rescue stations, rejecting a proposal to place them in a centralized location, and reduce their number from 21 to 11.
- Voted to keep the new West Germantown Fire Station in the fast-growing Up County on schedule to open in 2005, rather than delay it a year as proposed by the County Executive.
- Increased the number of recruits in the July Police academy class for the coming year from 30 to 50 to replace retiring officers and fill vacancies.
- Rejected the County Executive’s proposal to charge County residents as much as \$650 for ambulance services.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Approved \$1.5 billion for County schools – 99 percent of the Board of Education’s request.
- Funded nearly all the Board of Education’s request for school construction of \$18 million, filling in a more than \$7 million shortfall in State aid.
- Preserved Council initiatives to reduce class size and introduce full-day kindergarten.
- Funded the number of children in both Federal Head Start and County Pre-Kindergarten at the current level of 2,363 children.
- Added \$600,000 for 16 additional maintenance workers to keep school buildings in good repair as State funding for modernizations lags.
- Included \$15 million in MCPS savings and efficiencies.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

- Added \$100,000 for new clinics for the uninsured through the Primary Care Coalition and increased funding for six existing clinics for the uninsured for \$240,000.
- Restored \$200,000 for home health aides and \$50,000 for chore services for in-home services for seniors and those with disabilities.
- Restored \$65,000 for transportation of seniors to centers for meals and programs.
- Restored \$70,140 to the Housing Opportunities Commission to maintain two of the County’s five Parent Resource Centers.
- Restored \$44,300 for the Senior Health Insurance Program that assists seniors with health insurance access.
- Restored \$140,000 for Baby Steps, a program that makes sure all children born in County hospitals get a risk assessment to ensure a healthy start in life.
- Restored \$250,000 in funding for the George Thomas Learning Academies, serving County youth with Saturday academic school programs.
- Added \$100,000 for the African American Health Initiative and \$100,000 for the Latino Health Initiative.

TRANSPORTATION

- Funded \$22.2 million in “Go Montgomery” projects.
- Approved \$7.6 million for design and land acquisition for Montrose Parkway West.
- Approved \$5 million for planning on new road and transit projects.
- Approved \$405,000 for planning and design of the Matthew Henson Trail in Aspen Hill and \$62,000 for four bikeway connectors.
- Approved \$1.9 million for additional Ride-On service with 15 new buses.
- Restored \$183,000 to the Fare Share/Super Fare Share transit incentives for businesses and their employees.
- Restored \$258,000 for residential road resurfacing to FY 03 levels.
- Included \$367,000 for pedestrian safety enhancements.
- Funded \$100,000 in intersection improvements.
- Extended the “Kids Ride Free” from 2 PM to 7 PM on Metrobus until December for \$200,000.

COMPENSATION

- Worked together with unions representing about 28,000 County employees to achieve \$18.5 million in compensation savings by delaying cost-of-living increases 4.6 months, affecting firefighters and represented employees of County Government, Montgomery College, the Montgomery County Public Schools, and Park & Planning. Non-represented employees in the last three would have a similar delay, saving \$715,000. County police and non-represented County Government employees, whose 2 percent COLA is lower than other negotiated agreements, will not have a delay. Total compensation savings will be \$19.2 million.



HOWARD A. DENIS  
District 1



MICHAEL KNAPP  
District 2



PHIL ANDREWS  
District 3



MARILYN PRAISNER  
District 4



THOMAS PEREZ  
District 5



NANCY FLOREEN  
At-Large



GEORGE LEVENTHAL  
At-Large



STEVEN SILVERMAN  
At-Large

SAVINGS

- Saved \$1.1 million in a review of group health costs, with potential for more significant savings in the future.
- Reduced MCPS staff development funding by \$3 million and MCPS central staff and materials operations by another \$2 million.
- Eliminated two senior library administrative positions, saving \$213,000, and also cut back by 25 percent on printer purchases for the libraries, saving \$30,000.
- Reduced the library materials budget by \$268,000.
- Saved \$305,000 by reducing daily and weekly cleaning of most County-owned facilities.
- Saved \$188,000 by implementing a “carry-in, carry-out” policy of waste disposal in County parks.
- Approved a three percent reduction in routine ballfield maintenance to save \$45,000 and also a deferral to future years of \$300,000 in the capital budget for the Ballfield Initiative to renovate and add ballfields.
- Eliminated all funding for personal County government computer replacements in the coming year.
- Delayed the construction of the Damascus, North Bethesda, White Oak, and North Potomac community recreation centers by one year.

TAXES

- Rejected the County Executive’s proposal to increase the County property tax by three cents per \$100 of assessed valuation due to the already heavy burden placed by rising assessments and Governor Ehrlich’s five-cent increase.
- Approved the County Executive’s proposal to increase the County income tax from 2.95 percent to 3.20 percent. This would raise \$21.9 million in the coming budget year and cost an additional \$125 per \$50,000 in taxable income.
- Approved a tripling of the fuel/energy tax, 70 percent of which is paid by non-residential customers, including federal facilities located in the County which otherwise contribute little in the way of taxes to the County. The measure will raise \$47 million and cost the average residential household an additional \$40 per year.
- Approved an increase in the County tax on wired and wireless telephones to \$2 a month per line. This would raise \$23.5 million more, with the impact on an average household depending on the number of phone lines.

LIBRARIES

- Restored to the budget 10 information and circulation staff at Bethesda, Gaithersburg, Rockville, and Wheaton libraries at a cost of \$340,000 to help implement self-service checkout machines.
- Added \$125,000 to open the renovated Bethesda library in October, rather than after Thanksgiving.
- Agreed reluctantly with the County Executive’s recommendation to reduce staff at the Special Needs library, while insisting the library remain open two Saturdays a month.
- Eliminated the large County bookmobile, saving \$116,000.
- Eliminated contract staffing for the County archives, saving \$40,000, with the Montgomery County Historical Society assuming responsibility.

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

- Restored \$3.5 million in funding compared to the County Executive’s March 17 budget.
- Restored \$400,000 in funding cut by County Executive for the Maryland College of Art and Design
- Provided a College reserve fund of \$1.85 million.

WASHINGTON SUBURBAN SANITARY COMMISSION

- Approved a WSSC budget that assures a sixth consecutive year of zero rate increase for water and sewer service.

HOUSING

- Approved \$16.1 million in spending authority for Housing Initiative Fund to create and preserve affordable housing.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Approved an increase of \$500,000 to \$5.5 million to boost the County Earned Income Tax Credit to help the working poor.
- Added \$348,000 to ensure that County solid waste facility workers earn a living wage.
- Agreed to purchase the BlackRock Center for the Arts.